



**Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona**

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**GERMAN AND FRENCH NATIONALS SENTENCED TO PRISON
FOR TRAVELING TO TUCSON FOR SEX WITH CHILDREN**

TUCSON, Ariz. – Manfred Knittel, 53, of Sigmaringen, Germany, and Sebastien Sarraute of Antony, France, 31, were each sentenced here this week to 51 months in prison to be followed by lifetime supervised release for Travel in Interstate Commerce with the Intent to Engage in Illicit Sexual Conduct in violation of Title 18, U.S. Code Section 2423(b). Each of the defendants pleaded guilty to traveling to Tucson, Ariz. with the intent to engage in sexual conduct with young girls.

Knittel was sentenced here on Monday, August 29, 2005 by U.S. District Judge Cindy K. Jorgenson; he pleaded guilty to a one count indictment on March 10, 2005. Sarraute was sentenced here today by U.S. District Judge Raner C. Collins; he pleaded guilty to a one count indictment on June 16, 2005. Both will be turned over to ICE for deportation after serving their sentences. Neither will be allowed to return to the U.S. Both were ordered to cooperate in the collection of a DNA sample and may be required to register as sex offenders prior to being removed from the United States.

Knittel and Sarraute became the subject of a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) investigation after coming into contact with ICE undercover agents and expressing the interest of traveling for the purpose of engaging in sexual conduct with minors.

Between August 2003 and late September 2004, Sarraute communicated with undercover ICE agents whom he believe to be purveyors of children for sexual activities. He paid a deposit to secure his reservation to travel to Tucson, Ariz., and eventually to Mexico, to participate in sexual activity with girls between 10-14 years old, preferably two at a time. He had agreed to pay a total of \$900 for the opportunity to have sex with children over a seven day period. He traveled to the Tucson International Airport on September 22, 2004 and was arrested by ICE agents.

Knittel expressed his preference with regard to the age of the children the type of sexual activity, the price and the dates of travel in communications and negotiations which took place between July and October 2004. Ultimately, Knittel agreed with the undercover agents to a price of \$875 and sent a deposit to ensure a pool of 6 to 11 year old girls from which to choose to engage in sexual activity. The defendant then traveled from Germany, arriving at the Tucson International Airport on October 31, 2004, for the purpose of having sex with the juvenile girls. Knittel was arrested shortly after landing. A search of his person found him to be in possession of the following items: the remainder of the deposit in U.S. currency, three condoms, two partially used blister packs of male performance enhancement drugs, a candle, panty hose, a stuffed animal and candy.

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"These men were poised to commit despicable and unconscionable acts," said Paul K. Charlton, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona. "We will use all the resources at our disposal to identify, investigate and prosecute those individuals who attempt to prey on innocent children."

"These cases clearly show there are pedophiles who mistakenly believe if they prey on children beyond our borders that they are outside the reach of the law," said Roberto Medina, Special Agent-in-Charge for ICE investigations in Arizona. "ICE is committed to doing everything possible to bring these predators to justice and prevent the sexual exploitation of children both here and abroad."

The investigations in these cases were conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution for Serrate was handled by Judson T. Mihok and Carin C. Duryee and the prosecution for Knittel was handled by Judson T. Mihok, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBERS: Knittel - CR-04-2391 TUC CKJ
 Serrate - CR-04-02138-TUC-RCC

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